

In
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of...

Truth & Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the
**Wellsburg
church of Christ**
Which meets at:
112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.

TIMES OF SERVICES

SUNDAY

Bible Classes* 10:00 AM
AM Worship 10:45 AM
PM Worship 6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes* 7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

Today's Sermon:

Motivation

*Audio CD's are available
free of charge in the foyer.*

*Please visit our website:
www.truthandright.org*

*If you have any questions regarding
what we teach and practice, please
feel free to ask*

Real Change, Slow Progress

Gary Henry

*"Not that I have already attained, or
am already perfected; but I press on ..."*
Philippians 3:12

When much-desired character change doesn't happen very quickly, we tend to give up hope that we can ever really change at all. But worthwhile journeys aren't usually accomplished all at once, and we shouldn't think that we've not gone anywhere, just because our journey toward God is not complete. Good things often take time.

The apostle Peter affirmed that real, significant character change can be a reality for those who are in Jesus Christ. In exhorting his readers to live reverently before God, he reminded them of the fundamental difference Christ had made in their lives: *"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober,*

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and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct ... knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:13-19).

But as we gain confidence in the POSSIBILITY of change, we also need to develop patience in the PROCESS of change. In this life, not even the most faithfully obedient Christian can claim to be anything more than a work in progress. In the ongoing renovation of our character, there is much damage yet to be repaired, and quick fixes will simply not suffice. In our hurried-up culture, we've gotten into the habit of demanding immediate results. But despite the appeal of an instant and effortless "makeover," wouldn't it be worthwhile to go for something greater, a real renewal that runs deeper than the surface? The unavoidable truth is that our hearts need an inside-out transformation. This is the goal God has in mind for us, and there is no shortcut to it. We should make sure that any impatience we have with our present imperfection does not turn into impatience with God Himself.

"A slow cure is best. Have courage and patience. The work of cleansing your soul will go on for a lifetime. Our perfection consists of struggling against our imperfection ... Think of the possibilities God has placed in you"

Francis de Sales

The Cult of the Naked Emperor *Gary Henry*

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"

1 John 1:8

It seems to be hard for those who hold up Christ as the answer to every problem to avoid pretending that they've made more progress than they have. We sometimes talk and act as if the devout Christian can be released completely from suffering and struggle in this life. Surely we know that the truth is otherwise, but like the courtiers in "The Emperor's New Clothes," all of whom praised the king's non-existent garments, we're afraid to speak the obvious. There is pressure to keep up the illusion of perfect emotional happiness and complete victory in the battle against sin. But the price we pay is that we actually make less progress in joy and purity than we would if we were more honest.

When it comes time to encourage a friend, we show that it's possible to be both realistic and compassionate. "Don't be so hard on yourself," we say. "It's okay to hurt and to struggle. All of us are broken vessels, and we needn't be afraid to experience life as it really is. We can't be perfect, but we can be persistent. Hang in there, and cry whenever you need to." These are wise words. But when the struggle is our own, we lose our balance, either drowning in despair or naively pretending that God has solved all of our problems already. It's hard to hold a balanced perspective.

Whatever it means in this life to be "in Christ," it does not mean total freedom from setbacks and sorrow. To be in Christ is to groan. It is to live out the days of our pilgrim-

age in hope. This hope can no doubt make a great difference in our present reality, but only when it's honest about what that present reality is. *"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life"* (2 Corinthians 5:2-4). Let us not conspire to praise our present "clothing" more than the facts warrant. If we're among His faithful people, Christ will one day clothe us in perfect glory. Our rags will be turned into riches. Until then, there is a need for honesty about our raggedness.

*"Have the courage to appear poor,
and you disarm poverty of its
sharpest sting" —Anna Jameson*

The Great Encounter Gary Henry

*"Do not be overcome by evil, but
overcome evil with good"*
Romans 12:21

Each of us helps to write the story of the human race every time we make a choice. Every single one of us is a part of this fascinating story. We either add to the dignity of our race by making choices that promote goodness, or we further degrade it by making those that promote evil. Surrounded by situations that were, for the most part, brought into being by forces outside our control, we either help to beautify or to mar the story of human freedom, depending on what we choose to do when faced with those situations. As Donald Creighton has suggested: "History is the record of an encounter between character and circumstance." Individually, we

are each a part of that encounter.

Not only is greatness of inward character the greatest of all greatnesses, but it lies within the power of every individual. It doesn't depend on having a public stage upon which to act. And it doesn't depend on whether other people are doing what they should. Try, for example, to hear a Washington or a Lincoln grumbling, "I could've been a great president if I'd been lucky enough to come to the office in other circumstances. If the times hadn't been so difficult, I might've had a chance to show them what I could do." In a very important sense, character is independent of external conditions. Good character does good work to meet the needs of the present moment, no matter what those needs happen to be. In your imagination, pick any truly great person and drop him or her into a different time, place, and social status. Doesn't the person simply do whatever is needed to improve THAT situation? Greatness of character doesn't wait on circumstance to deal it a "favorable" hand. It plays with honor WHATEVER hand it is dealt.

Do we realize the importance of our own daily encounter with circumstance? What is outside of us can seem so much more powerful than what is inside. The surging rush of all that happens can appear so overwhelming that it's hard to feel we're anything more than "dust in the wind." And yet ... there remains within us a will that is free. When we make even a single choice to do what is right before God, we alter the course of history for the better.

*"Nothing splendid has ever
been achieved except by those
who dared believe that some-
thing inside them was superior
to circumstance" —Bruce Barton*

Those Serving This Week

Sunday AM

Class Prayer	Don Coen, Jr.
Announcements	Ed Roberts
Song Leader	Ken Prager
Scripture	Zechariah 10
Reader	Matt Ferrell
Prayer	Chuck Isinghood
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Lord's Supper	
Bread	Don Coen, Sr.
Fruit of the Vine	Dan Marton
Serve	Terry Smith
Serve	Blake Headen
Closing Prayer	Harold Marshall

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

Sunday PM

Announcements	Ed Roberts
Song Leader	Harold Marshall
Scripture	Zechariah 11
Reader	Earl Miller
1st Prayer	Don Coen, Jr.
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Communion	Chuck Isinghood
Closing Prayer	Tim Henderson

Wednesday

Announcements	Ed Roberts
Class Prayer	Dave Harless
Song Leader	Dan Marton
Invitation	Don Coen, Jr.
Closing Prayer	Don Coen, Sr.

News N Notes

Please continue to remember these in your prayers:

Chaz Schaefer was baptized last night. Let us all welcome him and pray for his continued growth as a child of God.

Prayer Requests:

- Charina Cambell
- Zeda Goddard's sons, Dallas and Terry, and her daughter Tammy Garrison
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Alfred & Mary Jane Myers
- Jimmy Roberts, Ed & Marie's son
- Jim Roberts, Ed Roberts' father
- Marie Roberts
- Kris Shane

Don't forget our Shut-ins

Nursing Home:

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers
- Josephine Clow

At Home:

- Mabel Fleming
- Zeda Goddard
- Betty Hunter
- Pauline Midcap
- Ann Rudolph

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please call:
304-914-2262 or 304-914-2263